# Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties <u>Addendum</u>

MIHP Number:

CE-789

Property Name:

Rowlandsville Mill (Davis-Christie Mill, Rowland Mill)

Property Address:

McCauley Road

Rowlandsville, Harford County

The Rowlandville Mill collapsed in late August 2007.

Bellmyer, Jane. "Mill, history collapse." *Cecil Whig*. <u>www.cecilwhig.com</u>: posted September 5, 2007. Retrieved September 7, 2007.

A historic mill on the banks of the Octoraro Creek near Conowingo has collapsed and efforts are being taken to salvage artifacts.

Rowlandsville Mill has been the property of Maryland for nearly 40 years when E. Ralph Hostetter donated it, and 22 acres of land.

"I made a gift to the state ... and they guaranteed me they would restore the mill as they did at Rock Run in Harford County," Hostetter said.

Rock Run is a working mill on the Havre de Grace side of Susquehanna State Park. Hostetter said the state at the time wanted to expand the park into Cecil County and the plan was to turn Rowlandsville Mill into a similar tourist attraction.

But the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the agency in charge of parkland, got the call that the mill, built in the 1800s, had caved in on itself.

"There was an expectation that the state would restore it," said State Parks Historian Ross M. Kimmel. "It was stabilized and a fence was put up for safety purposes."

But that was as far as it ever got, he said.

"We wanted to do something with it. It was an issue of money," he said.

Kimmel said the Rowlandsville Mill is one of hundreds in the state's inventory of historical properties. However, state ownership closes the door on a lot of money that could have been used for restoration.

"It's next to impossible for a government to get grants," he said.

Kimmel said restoration projects such as this are on a list for state funding along with water and sewer projects, which tend to take priority.

Hostetter lived in the mill house for several years as a child.

# MIHP Addendum CE-789 Rowlandsville Mill (Davis-Christie Mill, Rowland Mill)

"In 1936 there was a gigantic flood along the Susquehanna River. My home on the riverbank was washed away. There was no place to live except the miller's house next to the mill. We went in there, fixed up the place and lived there for a couple of years," he said.

His first job was at the mill.

"I was surprised that the miller required me to get a Social Security number," he said. "I thought only old people had Social Security numbers."

Years later Hostetter had the opportunity to purchase the mill and the adjoining property, including the Rowlandsville United Methodist Church building.

"It was in excellent shape at the time," he said.

He learned about the state's expansion project while sitting on the board of directors of the state parks and made his offer.

"They also agreed to maintain the dam at Basin Run about a quarter-mile upstream of the mill," he said.

Hostetter is disappointed.

"They did absolutely nothing. Nor did they utilize the land. They just abandoned the whole project," he said.

Kimmel said DNR engineers and historians are picking through the ruins and extracting mill parts and other relics and moving them to what he called "a secure location." In the meantime he said a 1990s-era plan to demolish the mill to its foundation might be revisited.

"It pains us to lose these historic structures," Kimmel said. "We can't save everything."

# MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST MAGI # 0807893414

# INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

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### CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

\_EXCELLENT

\_\_DETERIORATED

\_XUNALTERED

XORIGINAL SITE

\_GOOD

\_\_RUINS \_\_UNEXPOSED \_ALTERED

\_\_MOVED DATE\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Rowlandsville Mill, located along side Octavora Creek in Cecil County off Route 308 in the village of Rowlandsville, is a frame, gable roofed structure of three stories plus attic. The bottom story and foundation are constructed of rubble fieldstone, with concentrations of large local stones at the four corners suggesting quoining. In recent years the mill has been reroofed in asphalt shingles.

The four-bay wide, chapboarded east facade which faces the road contains the following openings on the basement level (reading from SE to NE corner): A window boarded up by a shutter made of vertical planks secured on one side by two large strap hinges; a bolted door; a small rectangular opening nearly at ground level intended probably as a ventilator window; another window partially boarded up; a second door encased in subsequent vertical planking, featuring a slightly projecting narrow wooden strip lintel; and attached to the northeast corner a small brick shed addition with eastern doorway. All of the windows possess simple timber surrounds with narrow, slightly projecting timber sills. The second story contains a similar sequence of window, wider door (for loading vehicles below with sacks of flour), window, regular sized door—all detailed in the same manner and boarded shut. The third story varies slightly: window, regular door, window, window; two of these windows retain their 6/6, double hung sash with assorted muntons in situ but all panes of glass missing. The northeast corner window is open, missing all of its sash.

The north gable end features two boarded up windows on the second story surmounted by two similar open windows in the third story (still with vestiges of sash, no glass), and two smaller windows in the gable shadowed by the deep overhang of the eaves. The stone first story flares out at an angle nearly a foot to create a massive watertable by the thicker walled foundation below. The brick shed addition with asphalt roof covers less than a quarter of the basement wall.

The west side of the mill facing Octavara Creek is articulated by two stories of windows corresponding to those elsewhere on the building (top story open with marginal sash members). Due to the slope of the ground toward the Creek, the stone portion on this facade accommodates two levels of three windows each.

On the south gable end where the undershot wheel was located and where evidence of the millrace exists in the depression extending several feet in front, and where part of the drive mechanism still exists in situ, the fenestration resembles that of the north facade except for the stone basement level. There, at the southwest corner is a doorway, and at the opposite corner a window. The top four windows are open with little or no sash left. This facade is suffering most from deterioration; plywood patches have been applied between the door and second story window, but the studs are exposed where the clapboarding has rotted away at the southeast corner. The same corner suffers from poor drainage as is evidenced by a serious crack in the stonework from below the wooden sill diagonally to the ground on the east facade.

Although the interior floorboards are missing in several locations between the bear the level and the second story, the structure is sufficiently sound to bear the weight of most of its original machinery.

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#### PERIOD AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW \_\_COMMUNITY PLANNING ARCHEULUGY-PREHISTORIC \_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PREHISTORIC \_\_RELIGION \_\_1400-1499 \_\_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC \_CONSERVATION \_LAW \_\_SCIENCE \_\_ECONOMICS \_\_LITERATURE \_\_1500-1599 \_\_AGRICULTURE \_\_SCULPTURE \_1600-1699 X.ARCHITECTURE \_EDUCATION \_MILITARY \_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN \_ART \_\_1700-1799 \_\_ENGINEERING \_\_MUSIC THEATER **XCOMMERCE** X\_1800-1899 \_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT \_\_PHILOSOPHY \_TRANSPORTATION 1900-\_COMMUNICATIONS XINDUSTRY \_\_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT \_OTHER (SPECIFY) \_INVENTION BUILDER/ARCHITECT SPECIFIC DATES c. 1840

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following recapitulates John McGrain's research on Rowlandsville Mill, carried out in conjunction with his Maryland Molinography:

A mill known as the Rowland Mill was shown at this location on Hauducoeur's map of 18. The 1850 manufacturer's census listed John Christy (sic) as the owner of a water mill: \$2,000 capital investment; 2 employees, 2 run of stones, 1 saw, and output of 220 barrels of flour, 1,000 bushels of meal, 300 bushels of corn and oats, and 150,000 feet of timber. The 1858 Martenet map notes the Rowland and Christie mill at the configuence of Octoraro Creek and Basin Run.

John McGrain lists two references to the village of Rowlandsville that appear in newspapers in the winter of 1851-52 along with the following data about the mill's increasing prosperity:

- (1) Cecil Whig, December 27, 1851, p. 1 "Sketch of New Valley", contains information about the shoe peg factory at Harmony with no data on Rowlandsville, but a Mr. Shermer of New Valley is credited with "having a church erected in the place" . . . a Methodist Protestant Church.
- (2) Cecil Whig, January 17, 1852, p. 2: "Letter from Rowlandsville...The mills here are frozen up and standing still. The Octoraro is frozen close, and the Susquehanna is in a very rough condition owing to the hard freezing . . "

The atlas of 187 showed Davis, Christie and Company as millers at Rowlands-ville on Basin Run and they were also atlas patrons. The atlas spelled the stream name "Bason" and some colonial records had spelled it "Bastard". Moses N. Gilespie was miller and atlas patron.

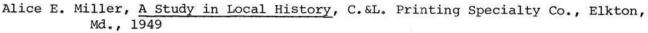
The 1880 census of manufacturing (also at Hall of Records) listed Davis and Christie's capital investment \$15,000; production was \$17,000 per annum, including 1,934 barrels of flour. Now with 3 run of stones, the mill was doing 25% custom work and had 60 bushel per hour elevator. A 60-foot fall on Basin Run drove 2 turbines at 280 rpm to develop 44 horsepower.

1880 Md. State Business Directory listed George M. Christie and Davis, Christie and Co., at Rowlandsville.

The periodical, American Miller, Vol. 10 (July 1, 1882), p. 317 notes that "Davis & Christie of Rowlandsville, Md., are increasing their capacity, and have put in Garden City Purifiers, furnished by the Garden City Mill Finishing Co., Chicago, Ill."

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES





George Johnson, <u>History of Cecil County</u>, published by author, Elkton, 1881.

John McGrain, <u>The Molinography of Maryland</u>: A Tabulation of Mills, Furnaces and Primitive Industries, Towson, Md. 1971.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

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The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438



# INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

CONTINUATION SHEET

Rowlandsville Mill (Significance)

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

Ultimately the mill was sold to the State of Maryland by Ralph Hostetter.

Directly across the Octaroro Creek from the mill was Frey's Forge, an ironworks built at the end of the eighteenth century. Quoting again from John McGrain's Molinography:

Frey's Forge was built about 1795 by John Churchman and Samuel Hughes on a 3,000 acre tract. It came into possession of John Jones and Thomas Rogers and passed to John Frey and Matthew Irwin in 1801. It was located on Horseshoe Bend of Octoraro Creek and came to be called Frey's Forge. Iron had been made here before 1795 by John Jones and Thomas Rogers, later by John Frey, Matthew Irwin and Joseph Roman. It was sold to McCullough Iron Company in 1859 and continued until 1892. The trademark was "Harvey's Patent Sheet Iron". A drawing of ruins of "McCullough Iron Co. . . . First mill site in 1795 [reveals] McCullough Iron Co. bought the mill in 1859 and made sheet iron. /It was/ destroyed by fire. Backroading Through Cecil County, Md., 1977, p. 54.

Finally, the industrial complex that was nineteenth century Rowlandsville was completed by the Octararo Rolling Mill, built in 1828 at the mouth of the Octararo Creek and described by McGrain as follows:

The 1850 census listed Joseph Roman and Co. rolling mill and bark mill with \$26,000 investment, 23 employees, and 1 water powered furnace. Output was 240 tons sheet iron and 150 tons ground bark (\$28,000), made from 300 tons pig iron, 250 tons coal, and an additional 14,000 bushels coal..

The works was acquired by Parke and Son of Rising Sun, and later McCullough Iron Company. By another account, the works had 1 each puddling and heating furnace and 1 train of rolls driven by water power; in 1856, the mill produced -262 tons sheet iron. Shutdown took place in 1893, RIOM, p. 175.

(RIOM - Report on the Iron Ores of Maryland with an Account of the Iron Industry, Joseph T. Singerwald, Jr., Md. Geological Survey, Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, Baltimore, 1911.)

The Rowlandsville Mill has suffered substantial deterioration due to the collapse of the two-story stone foundation wall on the south gable end. This wall along the millrace has completely fallen in except for approximately four feet at each corner.

Because of this collapse, the framing section at the south gable end is severely sagging.

The interior of the mill contains mostly machinery from late nineteenth century renovations in the mill. From the early period, there remains one set of stones with associated machinery and occasional pieces of hardware. The set of stones has a chair and hopper that appeared to be original. Strap hinges on two exterior shutters and several interior doors are from the period of construction of the mill. Of particular interest is the long strap hinges on the upper section of a door on the east facade and the wood box lock on this section of the door (the lower section of the door has been removed). The attached inventory lists other mill machinery found within the structure.

### ADDENDA

In 1984 the Department of Natural Resources contracted with Joe Getty to conduct a follow-up survey of selected historic properties on DNR lands. DNR funded the field survey and photography but did not prepare finished copy.

The attached photocopy pages were forwarded to the Maryland Historical Trust to supplement existing files.

All original material and photographs remain in the possession of the Department of Natural Resources under the supervision of Ross Kimmel (x3771).

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Magi No.

CE-789

DOE \_\_yes \_\_no

1. Nam	(indicate p	referred name)		
historic	Rowland Mill,	Christie Mill,	Davis - Christic	Hill
and/or common	Rowlandsville	Mill		
2. Loca	ation	3		
street & number	Route 308			not for publication
city, town	Rowlandsville	vicinity of	congressional distr	ice First
state	Maryland	count	y Cecil	
3. Clas	sification		20	
Category  district building(s) structure site object	Ownership  — public  — private  — both  Public Acquisition  — in process  — being considered  not applicable	Status  occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	entertainmen government	museum park private residence treligious scientific transportation x other: none
4. Own	er of Prope	rty (give names	and mailing addre	sses of <u>all</u> owners)
name	Department of	Natural Resona	ces	
street & number	Taves State	Office Bldg		e no.: 269-3771
city, town	Annapolis	0 stat	e and zip code	1D 21401
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Survey No. CE -789

Condition

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deteriorated ruins unexposed

Check one

\_\_\_\_ unaltered
\_\_\_\_ altered

Check one

\_\_\_ original site
\_\_\_ moved | date of move

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

ADDENDUM TO BERTHAN 1974 SURVEY FORM

8.	Significance	2
- NO.	and a second sec	_

Survey No. CE -789

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name/title	Joe Cetty				April 100 April		
organization	Department of	Natural Re	Soulls	date Febru	iany 1984		
street & number	Towes Stake	Office Bld	41		6 264-3771	W.	
city or town	Amagorlis		0	state M	D	n ga maran kana da Cita manik di Salayan a Masayan ayan da ka	_

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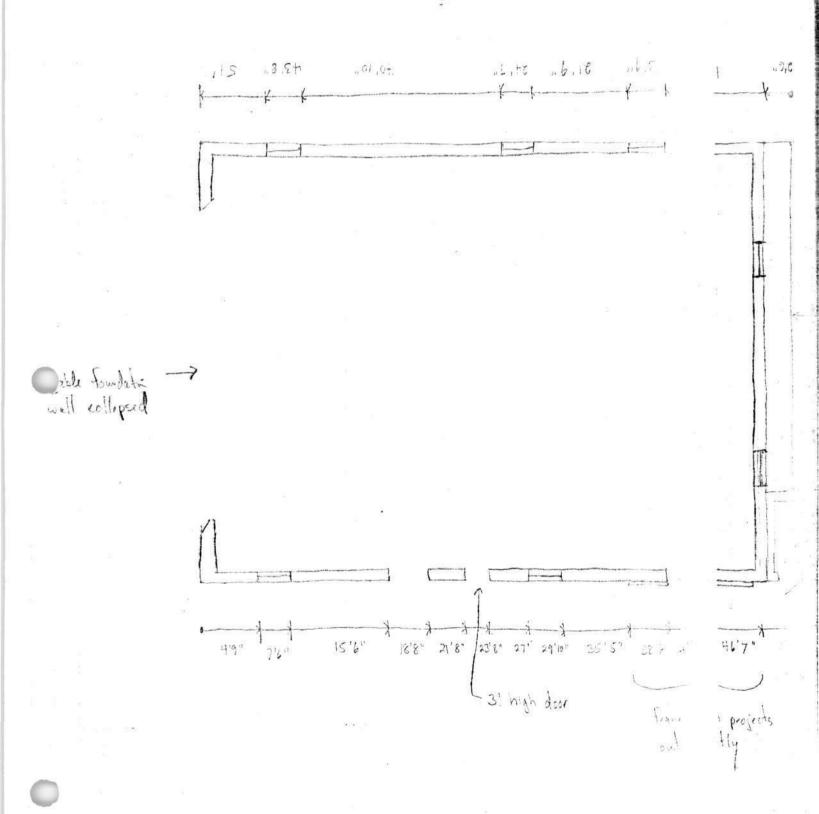
Maryland Historical Trust

Shaw House

21 State Circle

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(301) 269-2438



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CE 789

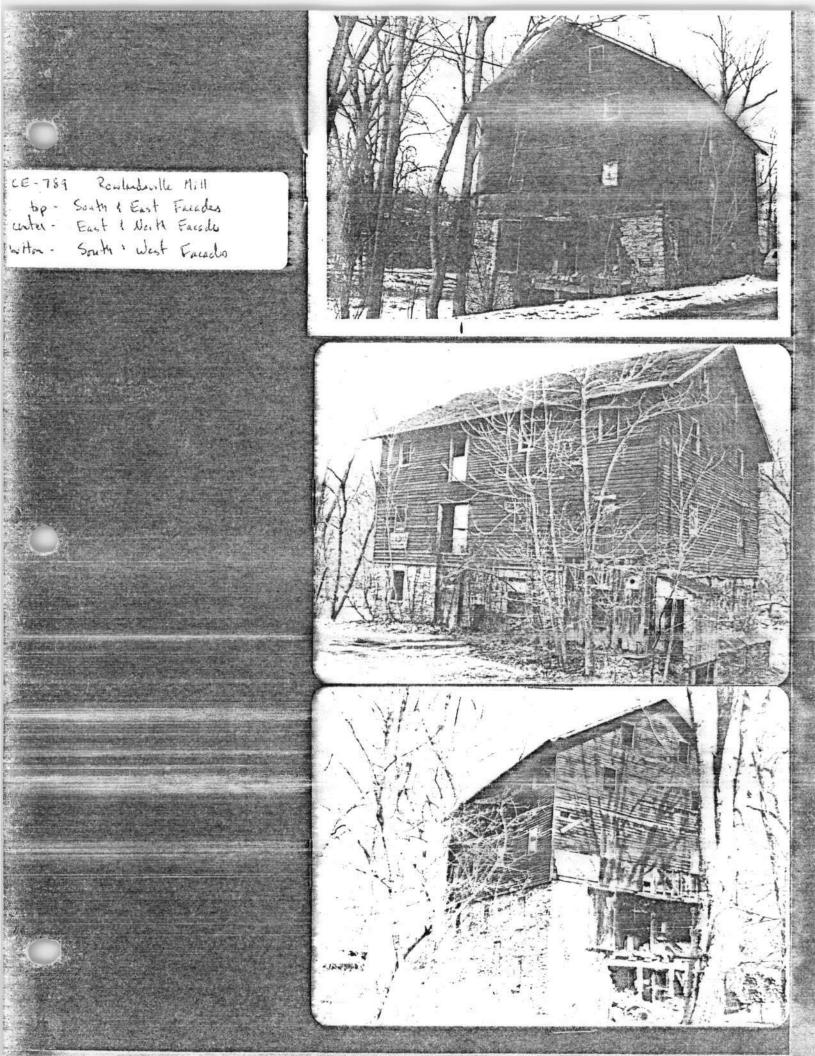
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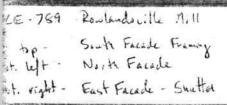
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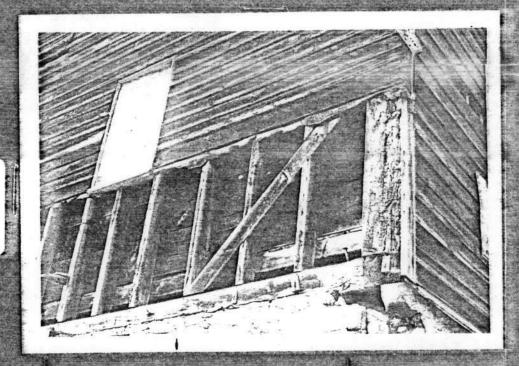
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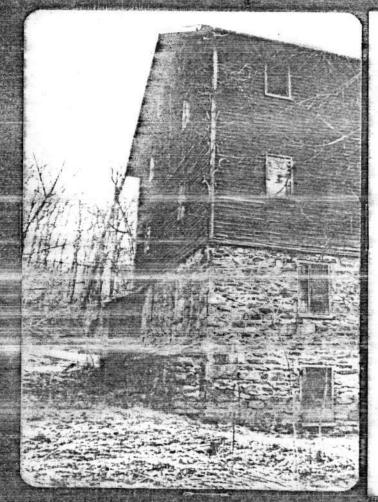
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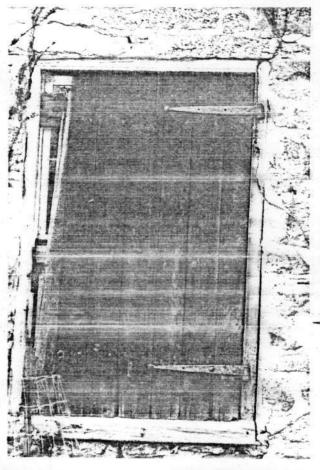
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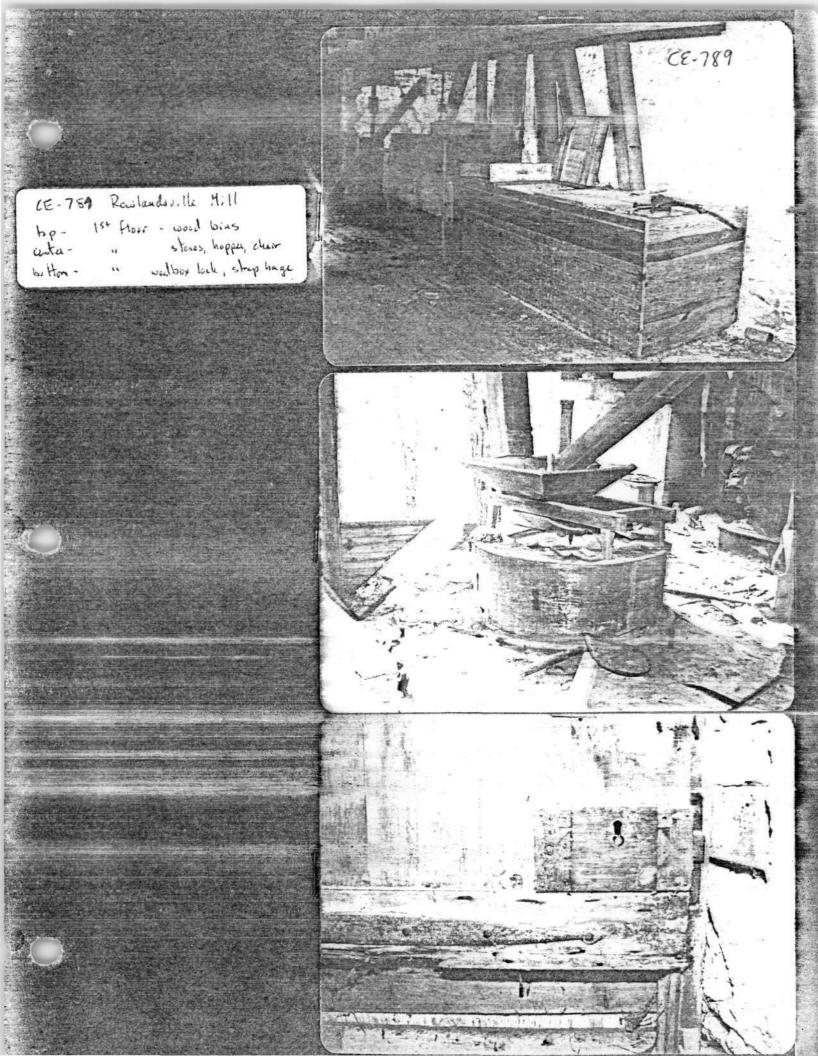




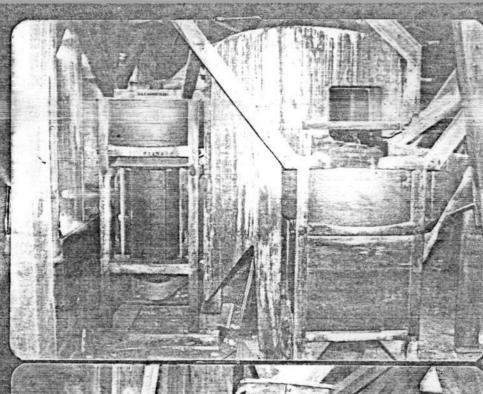


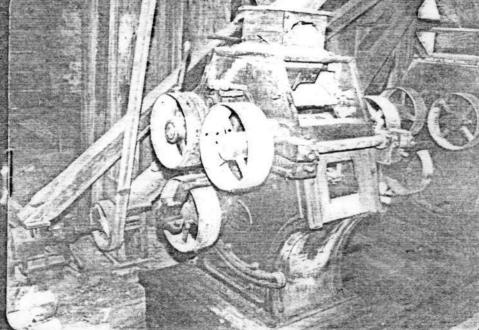


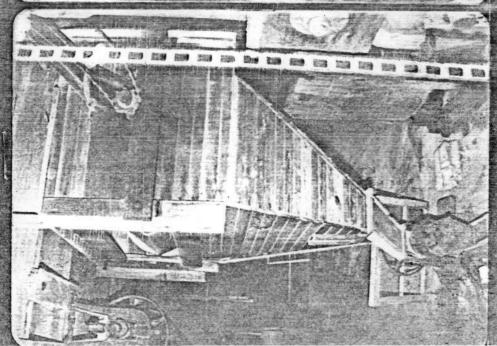
CE-789 Rowlands, lle Mill by - Interior framing but left - 1st floor - flour packer but right - 2-d floor - separator



CE: 789 Rowlandar. He Mill
top- 2nd Story Brush Drum Cleaner
unta- "Roller Processor
bottom- "Bulton Cleaner





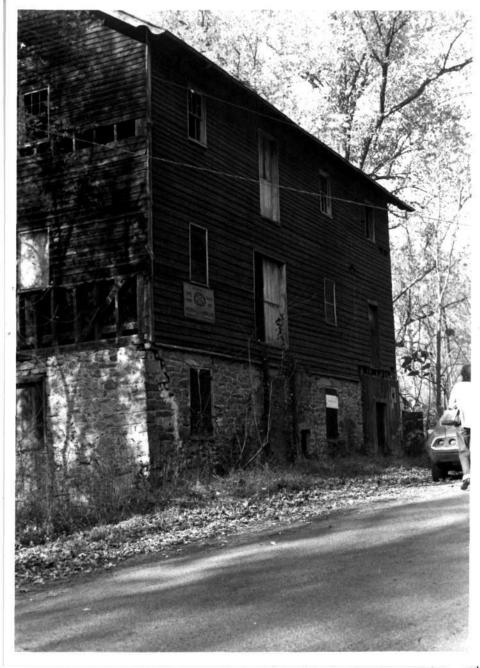




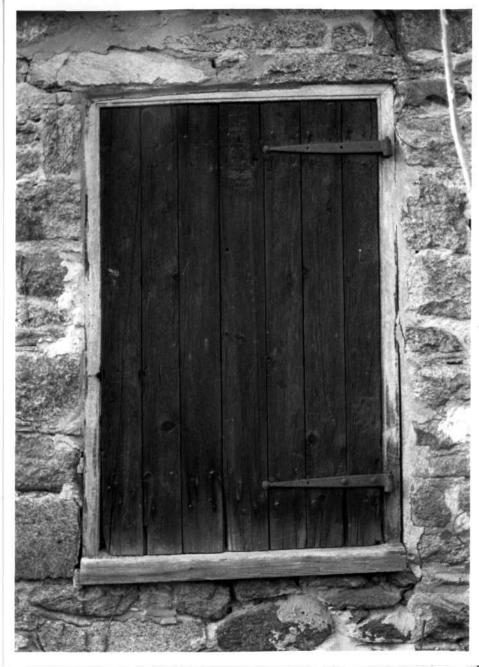
DAVIS / CHRISTY MILL CE-189 ROWLMDSVILLE, MD. NORTHWEST ELEVATION NEG. / MD. HIST. TRUST 2/80 PIST



Rowlandsville Mill Rowlandsville (Susquehanna State Park) south gable end B. Deale 11/78



Rowlandsville Mill
Rowlandsville
(Susquehanna State Park)
southeast elevation
B. Deale 11/78



Rowlandsville Mill
Rowlandsville
(Susquehanna State Park)
Detail: window opening SE corner
B. Deale 11/78

